

July 1, 2005 Social Work Licensure Begins

Effective July 1, 2005, the provisions of P.A. 61 of 2004 go into effect. This causes significant changes to the regulation of the social work profession.

Title Changes:

Registered Social Work Technician becomes Registered Social Service Technician

Registered Social Worker becomes Licensed Bachelor's Social Worker

Certified Social Worker becomes Licensed Master's Social Worker

Regulatory Changes:

The social service technician continues to be a registration. If an individual is registered, only he or she can say they are a social service technician. An individual who is not registered can do similar work but they cannot be called a social service technician.

The bachelor and master social worker will change from a registration to a license. This means that only the individuals who are licensed can call themselves social workers and that the tasks defined by the public health code as social work have to be done by licensed social workers. This transition will be difficult for many but it will cause Michigan to be in line with most other states.

New administrative rules have been developed to address the new provisions of the law. They are available at the following website:

Scope Changes:

To provide better distinction between the experienced practitioner and the "new" practitioner, a limited license was created at each level of practice. This limited license allows the individual licensee to practice the activities/functions of the full registrant/licensee while under the supervision of the full licensee. For example, an individual who has completed their bachelor degree in social work would like to have a chance to practice what they have learned but they need to have guidance in their early stages. The limited bachelor's license provides them with the opportunity to perform bachelor social worker tasks while under the guidance and supervision of a master's social worker. At the completion of 2 years (4,000 hours) of supervised practice, the individual is ready to be a licensed bachelor social worker.

Additionally, the legislation provides for a distinction between the master's social worker who is mainly doing private practice activities and one-on-one counseling and the master's social worker who is focusing on macro activities such as running a community agency. The master's social worker license will now be available with a designation in either clinical practice or macro practice. (People who currently hold the certified social worker registration will be issued a license as a master's social worker in both fields.) The initial license will be issued for only one area of practice but the second area can be acquired with the completion of experience under a master's social worker in that area of practice.

The Public Health Code provides a definition of the practice for each level of regulation. These definitions were used to determine the areas in which experience would be needed for each level. To assist people in understanding the differences in the levels of regulation, a grid was created to show who would typically be responsible for various activities or functions. This is not an inclusive grid but it is intended to assist you in understanding the differences in the scope of practice for each license type.

Task	Tech	BSW	MSW	
			Macro	Clinical
Interviewing clients regarding client's situation	X			
Provide information about available services	X			
Provide assistance regarding community resources	X			
Provide linkages to community services	X			
Conduct case-finding activities in community	X			
Monitor client's compliance with program's expectations	X			
Provide life-skills training	X			
Case Management		X		
Case Management for high risk clients				X
Advocacy for individual		X	X	X
Advocacy for group/communities		X	X	X
Psychosocial assessment		X		
Information and referral		X	X	X
Community organization		X	X	
Identification of presenting problem		X		
Teaching/Education of client		X		X
Research		X	X	
Intervention planning and evaluation		X		
Intervention methods using specialized and formal interactions				X
Coordination/evaluation of service delivery			X	
Development of social welfare policy			X	
Provision of training regarding community needs and problems			X	
Supervision of macro social workers			X	
Consultation regarding agency practice and policy development			X	
Psychotherapy with adults				X
Psychotherapy with children				X
Psychosocial assessment				X
Diagnosis of mental, emotional and substance abuse disorders				X
Child welfare				X
Child or adult custody				X
School social work				X
Corrections social work				X
Forensics social work				X
Medical setting social work				X
Supervision (of clinical social workers)				X
Treatment planning and evaluation				X
Directing clinical programs				X
Consultation regarding clinical issues				X
Consultation regarding agency practice & policy development				X

Information For People with Current Registrations at the Technician, Social Worker or Certified Social Worker Level

All current registrations will automatically be transferred to the equivalent classification

Social work technician registration = Social service technician registration

Social worker registration = Bachelor's social worker license

Certified social worker registration = Master's social worker license

All currently registered master's social workers will be given both the macro and clinical designations on their licenses. They are expected to practice only in their area of their expertise – macro social workers should not be practicing clinical social work and clinical social workers should not be practicing macro social work. Frequently it is difficult to separate the functions so it will be possible to hold both designations.

If the currently registered individual did not have a degree in social work or complete the ASWB examination, their license will remain active. Their license status will be not changed even though the requirements for licensure have changed.

Those who have let their registrations lapse will be reviewed on a case by case basis for the next year to determine the best way to address this issue. The new administrative rules provide for the submission of 45 continuing education credits with the application for relicensure. The types of acceptable programs is listed also in the continuing education section of the rules and more information will be made available regarding approved activities as soon as possible.

The renewal cycle in April 2006 will start the following changes:

The licenses/registrations will be valid for 3 years rather than the current 2-year cycle

BSW and MSW licensees who renew in 2006 will have to complete 45 hours of board approved continuing education activities in the 2006 – 2009 licensing cycle.

There are no continuing education requirements for the social service technician.

Basic information regarding acceptable continuing education is listed in the administrative rules and more information will be posted on the website as soon as the methods for approving courses are finalized by the Board and Department

Experience To Be Earned in a Limited Registration/License Status

The addition of a limited registration or license at each level of regulation allows qualified individuals to gain the required experience after meeting the educational requirements while in an appropriate supervisory situation. Starting September 2005, experience for the social service technician and either the bachelor's or master's social worker must be earned while in a limited status. Limited license

social workers will be able to take the examination required for full licensure while they are earning their experience.

New Registration/License Documents To Be Automatically Issued to Current Registrants

For those who did not renew in 2005 but currently hold an active registration, new registrations or licenses will automatically be sent to reflect the new levels of regulation. The new documents will be mailed in August or September. Those who renewed in 2005 have a statement on their license that indicates effective July 1 2005, the SW and CSW registrations become BSW and MSW licenses.

NOTE: For those who have a master's degree but are only licensed at the bachelor's level and want to have a master's social worker level for macro practice, applications will be accepted until July 2006. Verification of education and experience will be required but applicants will not have to complete an examination for licensure in macro practice. Submission of the education and verification of experience in acceptable practices will also have to be submitted. In July 2006, the initial applicant for a macro practice will be required to complete the ASWB's Advanced Generalist examination.

Applicants for the clinical practice license will have to verify their experience, education and complete the ASWB's Clinical examination.

BSWs with clinical experience will have to complete the requirements of education, experience and pass the ASWB Bachelor's examination.

Enrollment in a master's degree social work program will no longer be an acceptable way to earn a bachelor's social worker license. Applicants will have to verify completion of a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program.

Starting July 1, all BSW and MSW applicants will be required to have a degree in social work. Other degrees will no longer be acceptable. [If the original registration was issued on the basis of some other degree, we will not take the license away. The degree requirement only applies to new applicants]

We will process applications currently in review under the rules that existed before July 1, 2005 unless the rules specify something different.

Supervision Requirements for Limited Registrations/Licenses

Limited Social Service Technician registration

- No more than 2,000 hours in 1 year
- Limited license issued for one year and can renew only once
- Supervisory review required at least 4 hours per month
- Supervision by licensed bachelor's or master's social worker

Limited Bachelor Social Worker license

- 4,000 hours at no more than 2,000 hours per year after degree completed
- Limited license issued for 1 year and renewed for not more than 6 years

Supervision by master's social worker
Work for no more than 40 hours per week
Supervisory review required of at least 4 hours per month in group or individual settings but at least 1 hour must be an individualized review

Limited Master's Social Worker license

4,000 hours at no more than 2,000 hours per year after degree completed
Limited license issued for 1 year and renewed for not more than 6 years
Supervision by master's social worker – same designation as limited – e.g. macro supervisor for macro experience and clinical supervisor for clinical experience
Work from no more than 40 hours per week
Supervisory review required of at least 4 hours per month in group or individual settings but at least 1 hour must be in individualized review
50% of the supervision should include individual contact during which active functions and records of limited licensee are reviewed

Alternate supervision arrangement requirements for bachelor's and master's level

In cases of extreme hardship where an approved supervisor is not available, supervision by a related healthcare practitioner can be requested. Before the alternate supervisor can be used, the limited licensee must submit a request with a proposed plan and documentation of the willingness of the alternate supervisor. The Board shall review the request and approve/disapprove the alternate supervisor.

Documentation of Supervised Experience

Experience for the Social Service Technician can only be verified by completion of the Michigan experience form

Experience for the Bachelor's or Master's Social Worker can be verified in one of the following ways:

1. Completion of Michigan experience form
2. Licensure from other state if had 4,000 hours of similar supervised experience required
3. Verified ACSW status (QCSW is not acceptable because it requires only 3,000 hours of post degree experience)
4. If supervisor no longer available, verification of experience from agency director or program director who would be familiar with abilities